

Remarks for Assembly Committee on Public Health
Regarding Assembly Bill 413
By Representative Kitty Rhoades
August 15, 2007



Thank you for having a public hearing on Assembly Bill (AB) 413 and providing me the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this proposal. This proposal creates a three-month temporary license for qualified respiratory care therapists who hold a license from another state.

Under current law, in order to practice respiratory care in Wisconsin, a person needs to hold a license through the Department of Regulation and Licensing (DRL). Among the requirements to obtain a license are completing an application form, remitting the fee, supplying passport photos, providing evidence of graduation from a school with a course of instruction in respiratory care approved by the American Medical Association, passing the National Board for Respiratory Care Certified Respiratory Therapist (CRTT) exam, and passing a state exam.

New graduates from a certified respiratory care program in Wisconsin may be eligible for a 1-year temporary license if they have completed everything listed above, but are either scheduled or waiting for the results of the national CRTT exam.

Similar to the temporary certificate afforded new graduates, AB 413 allows DRL to approve a temporary 3-month license for another category of individual: those who hold a license to practice certified respiratory care in another state. This temporary 3-month license would help hospitals in the border areas of our state recruit and fill vacant certified respiratory care therapist positions with well-qualified individuals who often have years of experience practicing respiratory care in a neighboring state.

An individual applying for a temporary license under AB 413 would need to complete an application form, remit the fee, supply passport photos, provide evidence of graduation from a school with a course of instruction in respiratory care approved by the American Medical Association, and provide evidence they have passed the national CRTT exam. By the end of the three month period, the individual would have to have taken and passed the state exam required in Wisconsin for full licensure.

As the demand for health care professionals increases, Wisconsin cannot afford to lose well-qualified applicants due to a lengthy certification process that leaves them in limbo. AB 413 will provide hospitals with an important recruitment tool to attracting and retaining certified respiratory care professionals.

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